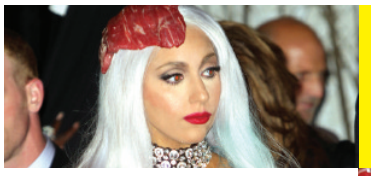

SNOWED IN
GAGA'S FURY COULD MELT GLACIERS {page 20}

THE LABEL USED TO BE ON THE DRINK
NOW IT'S ON YOU
{page 12}

ENGAGED
TWAIN AND HER BEAU ANNOUNCE
SCENE {page 14}

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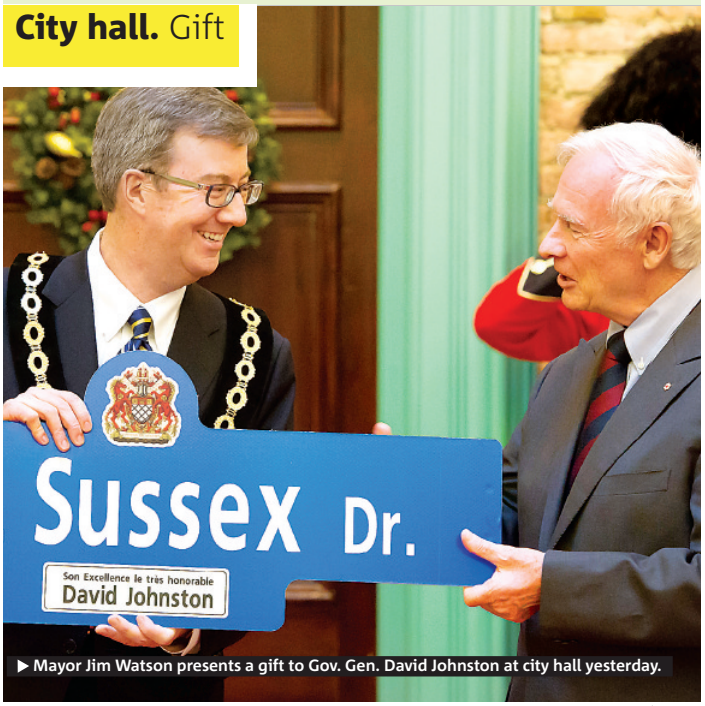

▶ Mayor Jim Watson presents a gift to Gov. Gen. David Johnston at city hall yesterday.

MARC DESROSIERS/FOR METRO

Welcome to the neighbourhood

Gov. Gen. David Johnston and Mayor Jim Watson had their first official meeting at city hall yesterday. They also viewed an exhibit of artifacts from the City of Ottawa's archives depicting visits by former governors general and by members of the Royal Family.

Terrorist sweep in the U.K.

Police arrest 12 men believed to be linked to Pakistan {page 6}

Philanthropy for hoarders

Let your old stuff go where it will be loved {page 4}

Pension changes 'greedy'

▶ Provincial ministers agree pooled private-sector pension plan a good idea ▶ Labour leaders say governments shouldn't wait to expand pension benefits

SEAN MCKIBBON
@METRONEWS.CA

Young Canadians should support federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty's decision not to expand CPP and his proposal for pooled pension plans for small business, a local business expert said yesterday.

"This is just greedy baby boomers trying to jack up part of their pension before they go out the door and passing along the bill to the young people remaining behind in the workforce," said Ian Lee, a professor at the Sprott School of Business at Carleton University.

Ahead of a meeting with provincial finance ministers in Kananaskis, Alta., Flaherty said he is not ruling out a future revamp to the Canada Pension Plan, but said now is not the time because the economy is fragile.

"Right now is probably not a good time to impose any more burdens on employers," Flaherty said.

The Organization of Economic Development and Co-operation rated Canadian seniors as the fourth wealthiest in a survey of developed countries' pension systems, Lee said, arguing Canadian seniors don't need any more help.

Flaherty had gone into a meeting of his provincial and territorial counterparts yesterday floating an idea for a new private-sector plan with pooled resources from small firms, employees and the self-employed.

Afterwards, Flaherty said finance officials will talk with employees, employers and financial institutions in the next month to make sure the plan meets their needs.

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

"We're passing on a huge burden to our young people. We know deficits are going to skyrocket. Ratcheting up CPP is not wise or prudent."
PROF. IAN LEE, SPROTT SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

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Singer lends big voice to college

- Opening for Céline Dion turned Dicaire into an overnight sensation
- She is an 'amazing example of perseverance': College president

JOE LOFARO
OTTAWA@METRONEWS.CA

Véronic Dicaire was once a small francophone girl from Embrun following the footsteps of Céline Dion.

Fast forward to 2008 and Dicaire was on stage in front of 22,000 people as the opening act for her idol before touring in Canada and Europe.

Her latest gig will be at La Cité Collégiale, as the college's new voice for students.

"I worked with students in their projects in communications with TV and radio, so when they thought of me I was very touched and pleased by that," said Dicaire.

Lise Bourgeois, president of La Cité Collégiale, said she is proud to have a Franco-Ontarian who is an international personality to lend her voice to her students.

"Whatever you want to be, believe in your dreams — it's my motto."
VÉRONIC DICAIRE

"We will work together to build promotions of programs that we offer, and it will be Véronic's voice saying how you can succeed at the college," she said.

"Her talent and pride in being Franco-Ontarian are undeniable."

Dicaire said this new three-year "adventure" with the college will enhance her career.

"You need some adventure to enhance what you're doing," added Bourgeois.

JOE LOFARO/FOR METRO

▶ Singer and impersonator Véronic Dicaire was named La Cité Collégiale's new voice for students at a news conference yesterday.

Suspects in court seeking bail

Bail proceedings began for two men charged with being accessories after the fact in the Dec. 6 shooting death of Yazden Ghiasvand Ghiasi.

A phalanx of supporters and bail sureties for Zakaria Dourhnou, 18, and Khaled Wehbe, 19, filled the seats behind the prisoners' dock in courtroom No. 30 at the Ottawa courthouse yesterday. Wehbe, dressed in a pale blue dress shirt, and Dourhnou, in a white t-shirt, sat quietly, listening to the proceedings. A publication ban was placed on all evidence and arguments given in the hearing.

"We are anxious to get the hearing over with and feel confident our client has a good chance."
STUART KONYER, DEFENCE LAWYER FOR KHALED WEHBE

As the hearing broke for lunch, a young woman left the courtroom in tears but did not stop for comment.

Ghiasi was killed inside a car and his body was dumped on Booth Street.

Witnesses were able to spot the licence plate and call police. Last week, sources told Metro the two men now asking for bail were arrested and charged after police saw someone approach the crime scene car with cleaning materials. SEAN MCKIBBON

News in brief

Suicide trial date set for April

COURTS. The jury trial of a Minnesota man who allegedly aided the suicide of a Carleton University student will take place on April 11, CBC.ca reports.

William Melchert-Dinkel, 48, was charged with aiding the suicides of a British man, in 2005, and Nadia Kajouji, who was a Carleton student, in 2008.

Melchert-Dinkel is accused of aiding Kajouji's suicide after talking to her in online chat rooms.
JOE LOFARO

New south-end commuter lot

BUSES. OC Transpo opened its new Leitrim Park & Ride yesterday. The new lot, which can accommodate 292 cars, is located on Gilligan Road, just south of Leitrim Road and just west of Albion.
TRACEY TONG

1 news

Curing colds isn't so common for common cold cures. Scan code for the story.

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Mike Benhaim gets into the list season spirit with his favourite new artists of 2010. More at metronews.ca/backbeat

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60 seconds

▶ Ottawa paramedic Yvonne Malbasha volunteers all over the world with GlobalMedic.

YVONNE MALBASHA

"I GET BACK FROM THEM MUCH MORE THAN I EVER GIVE"

She's been an Ottawa paramedic since 1996, but when Yvonne Malbasha's not saving lives in the nation's capital, she's making a difference overseas as member of GlobalMedic.

What's GlobalMedic all about?
GlobalMedic is a charitable organization founded about 11 years ago by a Toronto paramedic named Rahul Singh, who is really an amazing man and a huge inspiration. GM is made up primarily of paramedics (but also some police officers and firefighters) and their primary function is to send in rapid response teams to respond to disaster situations like tsunamis, flooding, earthquakes, sending medical teams and water purification teams. We have responded so far to about 50 different disaster situations in many countries and we are all volunteers.

When did you first get involved?
I have been involved with GM for about four years, and have been also involved with other disaster relief organizations since 2004.

What inspired you to get involved?
I became involved out of a strong sense of wanting to give back and help those less fortunate who have not had the opportunities in life that I have.

Why go overseas when you can make a difference here in Canada?
I never get the feeling that I really can make a difference in Canada. We live in a very privileged society in North America where clean running water, flushing toilets, food and shelter and clothing are all taken for granted.

● TRACEY TONG

Give old stuff a second life

▶ Shepherds of Good Hope collects items for hamper program, which will help over 1,000 families this year ▶ Donations skyrocket this time of year

TRACEY TONG
@METRONEWS.CA

CONTRIBUTED

▶ Volunteers give the gift of time at Shepherds of Good Hope.

For many people, the holiday season means that new things are coming into the household. And for others, your newly retired loveseat, microwave and coffee pots mean a fresh beginning.

This year, a holiday gift for you could mean a gift for someone else in need.

The Ottawa Mission is looking for used household items, like microwaves, toaster ovens, cutlery, kitchen gadgets, twin beds, loveseats, small tables and new bed linens to furnish homes of clients who are getting back on their feet.

"It's wonderful. People get things for Christmas and Hanukkah and now have old stuff," said spokeswoman Shirley Roy.

If you're looking to make a holiday donation to a worthy charity, there are dozens of good causes with room under the tree for your gift.

"We make sure everyone in the shelter system has a stocking to open on Christmas Day."
ROB EADY,
SHEPHERDS OF GOOD HOPE

In addition to household items, the Mission also welcomes donations of toiletries, new wool socks and underwear, gently used men's clothes and outerwear, work boots, shoes and towels.

"Most of these items we get multiple daily requests for," said Roy.

So far, the Shepherds of Good Hope has gotten a lot of donations from the general public, said spokesman Rob Eady.

"The general public been good to us."

The shelter currently needs women's pajamas, non-perishable food, cutlery, coffee mugs, plates and bowls and stocking stuffers.

People wanting to give to the Salvation Army can donate through the Kettle Campaign or drop off a toy for kids up to age 12 through Toy Mountain.

Get rid of it

To donate household goods to the Ottawa Mission, call 613-234-1144 during weekday business hours to arrange for delivery or pickup.

- All items must be in good working order.
- Since the shelter doesn't have a lot of storage, the shelter may ask the donor to store their item for a few days until they can find someone who can make good use of it, said Shirley Roy.

Animals need loving, too

With a 40 per cent shortfall on its seasonal fundraising campaign, the Ottawa Humane Society is appealing to supporters to donate funds.

"Due to a supplier problem that resulted in the delay of a major campaign mailing, we haven't received a response from many of our regular donors, many of whom support us once a year, at Christmas time," said executive director Bruce Roney.

● TRACEY TONG

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ALESSANDRA TARANTINO/GETTY IMAGES

▶ Pope Benedict XVI delivers a Christmas greeting at the Vatican on Dec. 20.

Pope blames society for abuse of kids

Catholic leader says sex scandals humiliated the church Calls for more help for victims

Pope Benedict XVI told Vatican officials yesterday that they must reflect on the church's culpability in its child sex-abuse scandal, but he also blamed a secular society in which he said the mistreatment of children was frighteningly common.

In his traditional, end-of-the-year speech to Vatican cardinals and bishops, Benedict said revelations of abuse in 2010 reached "an unimaginable dimension" that required the church to accept the "humiliation" as a call for renewal.

"We must ask ourselves what was wrong in our proclamation, in our whole way of living the Christian life, to allow such a thing to happen," the Pope said.

Benedict also said, however, that the scandal must be seen in a broader social context, in which child pornography is seemingly considered normal by society and sexual tourism is on the rise.

"The psychological destruction of children is a terrifying sign of the times," Benedict said.

The traditional Christmas speech to Vatican cardinals and bishops is an eagerly anticipated address that Benedict uses to focus the church hierarchy on key issues.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Scandal

▶ **Victims** The sex-abuse scandal erupted on a global scale this year with revelations of thousands of victims in Europe and beyond, of bishops who covered up for pedophile priests and of Vatican officials who turned a blind eye to the crimes.

U.S. JUSTICE

Teacher sentenced in sex case

A man who taught English in Cambodia was sentenced yesterday to nearly nine years in federal prison for travelling abroad to have sex with a 14-year-old girl, in what a judge called one of the most disgusting cases that has come before him.

Michael Dodd, 61, pleaded guilty under a plea agreement in September to travelling to Cambodia to engage in sex with a minor.

Dodd was convicted in a Cambodian court of sexually abusing the girl, and was sentenced to 10 years in prison, but served 16 months, authorities said. He was extradited to the U.S. in February where he was prosecuted under a federal law that outlaws child sex tourism even if the crimes were committed in other nations.

Dodd claims he had plans to marry the 14-year-old.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NDP wants all Douglas files out

Saskatchewan New Democrats are concerned that Ottawa may not release all of the decades-old intelligence on socialist icon Tommy Douglas.

Only 456 heavily censored pages from the 1,142-page dossier have been made public.

The federal government is now promising to release more material by March 31.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Anti-terrorism sweep nets 12 men in Britain

Pre-dawn raid was a joint operation by spy agency MI5 and police Bust is biggest since April 2009

In the biggest anti-terrorist sweep in Britain in nearly two years, police have arrested a dozen men accused of plotting a large-scale terror attack on targets inside the United Kingdom.

The suspects, who ranged in age from 17 to 28, had been under surveillance for weeks and were believed to have links to Pakistan and Bangladesh, security officials said.

The arrests come amid growing concerns in Europe over terrorism following a suicide bombing in Sweden and reported threats of a terror attack on a European city modelled on the deadly shooting spree in Mumbai, India.

Police swooped in before dawn yesterday in coordinated raids on houses in four cities.

Counterterrorism officials declined to give more details of the latest alleged plot. No details were given as to whether explosives or arms were found, and searches were under way in the homes where the arrests took place.

The arrests were not believed to be part of any planned holiday season attack, said a British security official.

In 2006, U.S. and British intelligence officials thwarted one of the largest plots yet, a plan to explode nearly a dozen trans-Atlantic airliners.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The plot

- Some of the details of a Mumbai-style plot directed at Britain, France or Germany came from Ahmed Siddiqui, a German citizen of Afghan descent who was captured by U.S. troops in Afghanistan in July.
- More than 170 people were killed in the 2008 terror attack in the Indian city of Mumbai.

Sailing. Trial

Turkey's president Abdullah Gul, left, and his counterpart Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov of Turkmenistan on the MV Savarona yacht in August 2009.

MURAT CETINMUHURDAR/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Yacht at heart of trial

Prosecutors claim the MV Savarona yacht played host to sex parties for an international prostitution ring. The alleged ringleaders went on trial yesterday.

Pipeline approval good news to Yukon

Approval of the Mackenzie Gas Project by the Natinal Energy Board is being welcomed by the government in Yukon, which says if the $16.2-billion project goes ahead, it would provide jobs and a portal to ship Yukon gas to market.

Six trillion cubic feet of natural gas locked in the Eagle Plains' basin could find its way to southern markets via a pipeline built alongside the Dempster Highway.

The energy board's decision on the Mackenzie gas project requires federal cabinet's approval.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

3

While construction of the 1,200-kilometre pipeline would be several years away, the board gave Imperial Oil Ltd. three years to make a decision.

Belarus strongman keeps grip on power

Alexander Lukashenko, the autocratic president of Belarus, appeared to have quashed any immediate threat to his continuing rule, declaring yesterday that he was the overwhelming winner of a presidential election that ended with a violent crackdown on reformists hoping for change.

No demonstrations occurred in the capital, Minsk, last night, an indication that things were returning to normal in Belarus, one of the most authoritarian of the former Soviet states and which the U.S. once labelled Europe's last dictatorship.

Lukashenko exercises overwhelming control over politics, industry and media in this nation of 10 million bordering Poland and the Baltic nations. The repression has been an embarrassment to the European Union, which offered billions in aid to Belarus if the elections were judged to be free and fair.

Hopes for improved democratic reforms had already dissipated as international observers and Western governments accused Lukashenko of using fraudulent counting and violence against protesters to keep himself in power.

Seven of the nine candidates opposing Lukashenko had been taken into custody.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SERGEI SUPINSKY/GETTY IMAGES

Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko in Minsk.

The leader

Alexander Lukashenko, 56, has ruled for 16 years.

- Lukashenko has used police raids to suppress opposition.
- His efforts to maintain a Soviet-era social safety net have made him popular with the working class and elderly.

Canon
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BEN STANSALL/GETTY IMAGES

▶ Passengers queue beside rows of luggage in Heathrow airport's Terminal 3 yesterday.

Heathrow faces Christmas with the cranks

Failure to clear snow, ice turns travel into bitter chaos
Gatwick cancels outbound flights until at least today

The Christmas travel season turned angry and chaotic yesterday as British officials struggled to clear snow and ice that paralyzed rail and air links and spawned cancellations and delays stranding thousands around the world.

More than 48 hours after Britain's last snowfall, some furious passengers with boarding passes for Monday flights were not even allowed into London's Heathrow Airport. Inside, piles of garbage grew and some people slept on terminal floors. Other travellers waited in the cold for up to six hours to get inside London's St. Pancras train station, where they had to wait more for Eurostar trains to mainland Europe.

"It can't be beyond the wit of man surely to find the shovels, the diggers, the snowplows or whatever it takes to clear the snow out from under the planes."
LONDON MAYOR BORIS JOHNSON

Chagrined British officials promised an inquiry into the failure to clear the remnants of a storm that dumped 12 centimetres over parts of England Saturday morning. Other European airports rebounded from weekend snowfall and resumed close to normal flight schedules by yesterday.

Heathrow operator BAA offered little hope of relief from travel purgatory, saying a maximum one-third of scheduled flights would be allowed to take off and land at Heathrow until at least tomorrow morning. The British government approved night-flight operations at Heathrow in an effort to remove the backlog, but officials warned it may take until after Christmas to do so — and longer if more snow falls.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

COCAINE SMUGGLING

Flight attendant jailed

An Air Canada flight attendant who was found guilty of smuggling cocaine into Britain has been sentenced to eight years in prison.

British media reports say Mandeep Shahi, 27, was accused of smuggling four kilograms of cocaine in her luggage during a flight from Toronto to London.

After landing at Heathrow Airport in March 2010, the woman from Mississauga, Ont., delivered the cocaine to a pair of drug dealers, who were under police surveillance.

Shahi was arrested five months later on her return to Britain, after police identified her using security camera footage.

Three other men involved in the smuggling were also arrested and have been sentenced to a total of 24 years.

The reports say Shahi told police she had no idea there was cocaine in her luggage, but a jury at Southwark Crown Court found her guilty of possession of drugs with intent to supply.

The judge said the group targeted Air Canada because of a perceived lack of security checks and the belief it operates in a country not known for drug smuggling.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Liberals on the attack

Opposition is betting governing party is vulnerable after two terms in office, especially on electricity and HST

Ontario's Liberal government is heading into an election year in attack mode, waging battles on several key policy fronts as Premier Dalton McGuinty attempts a third consecutive majority.

The unofficial campaign for the Oct. 6, 2011 vote began with the fall sitting of the legislature, as the government went on the offensive immediately after releasing its 20-year, $87-billion long-term energy plan.

Weak spot?

The Green Party of Ontario believes the Liberals are vulnerable on the energy file.

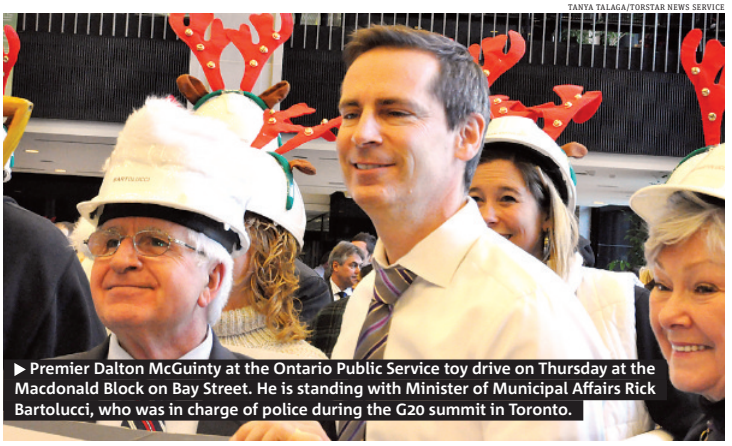
The Greens also want more attention to farming issues, including tax reforms to support local producers and processors who are being driven out of business by regulations, said leader Mike Schreiner.

Recent polling shows the Progressive Conservatives out in front of the Liberals by a healthy margin, even though few voters know who Opposition Leader Tim Hudak is or what policies he supports.

The New Democrats also predict a rough ride for the Liberals, especially over the rising electricity bills, and plan to keep pushing the government to remove the HST from utilities.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TANYA TALAGA/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



▶ Premier Dalton McGuinty at the Ontario Public Service toy drive on Thursday at the Macdonald Block on Bay Street. He is standing with Minister of Municipal Affairs Rick Bartolucci, who was in charge of police during the G20 summit in Toronto.

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Troops mark last Christmas in Kandahar

On Dec. 25, VIPs will most likely serve up Christmas dinner for Canadian soldiers

MURRAY BREWSTER/THE CANADIAN PRESS

▶ Master Cpl. Stephane Gelinas decorates a tree at a combat outpost in the Panjwaii district.

The weather outside is always frightful, and when you're under fire, it's never delightful.

And what Canadian soldiers wouldn't give to let it snow, to brighten the drab, winter-scorched farmland of western Panjwaii.

Peace on Earth seems far away this season, almost as distant as when troops celebrated their first Christmas amid the ruins here almost seven years ago.

Dec. 25 is expected to come and go with the grind of army orders and routine of patrols. But there is some holiday cheer; decorations here and there around Kandahar Airfield. Soldiers have started to receive packages, little comforts such as blankets, gloves and nicknacks, dutifully mailed by relatives.

And a spartan combat outpost in Fathullah has a full-sized artificial tree that was shipped over by a soldier's wife. THE CANADIAN PRESS

"Some guys will likely cry on the 25th because they don't have their kids here."
MASTER CPL. STEPHANE GELINAS

INSURANCE FRAUD

Top bogus claims of the year

Manitoba's auto insurer has released the biggest claims frauds of 2010.

Manitoba Public Insurance says at the top of the list is a man who denied crashing his car. He told claims investigators it was stolen, but DNA from blood on the steering wheel proved he was involved. In second place is a man who came forward after four years to admit he deliberately burned a vehicle that belonged to his one-time fiancée.

Another man reported his vehicle had been struck in a parking lot, but an investigation found he simply ran into a snowbank and sign.

MPI's special investigations unit has recovered fraudulent claims worth more than $50 million in the last five years.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

AIR TRAVEL

Piercings set off airport alarms

Body piercings are setting off alarms for security screeners at a B.C. airport.

Kamloops Airport manager Fred Legace says passengers going through airport security during the busy Christmas season should carry as little metal as possible — and that includes removing body piercings.

Legace says anything that adds to the metal content will likely make a person subject to secondary screening, so passengers might want to remove hidden piercings. He says the issue has come up recently at several airports where the metal detectors go off in an "unusual location" and screeners have to investigate further.

Legace reminds passengers that all Christmas presents should remain unwrapped to be screened and toy guns should all go to the checked baggage.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Family of face donor, recipient meet for first time

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Poor hit hardest by rising food prices, study says

Steep dairy costs a made-in-Canada phenomenon: Author

The price of staple foods has been rising faster than inflation, hitting the poor harder than others and forcing them to make unhealthy compromises, a new study says.

The cost of basics for a low-income household's dinner — baked goods, dairy and meat — has been outpacing the consumer price index, according to the Institute for Competitiveness and Prosperity, a Toronto-based think-tank.

"The items that are tracking higher are the items that low-income people usually eat, and find the most available," says co-author John Stapleton, a social policy consultant.

Fruit and vegetable prices, as well as fish, come in below inflation. But the poor are not buying as much of those products as wealthier people, the study found, noting that's mainly because big grocery stores tend to locate outside poor areas, and low-income people tend to depend more on pre-packaged products that dominate corner stores.

46 Dairy boards restrict the quanity of milk produced, mainly to maintain incomes for farmers. That means consumers are paying 46 per cent more for milk products than in other industrialized countries, the authors say, pointing to research by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Higher prices for meat and baked goods are linked to a surge in global commodities tied to 2008's financial crisis. But higher dairy prices are linked to Canadian supply management, the authors argue.

While the inflation phenomenon is new, spending by low-income families has long been geared toward food of lower nutritional value, the study says.

Stapleton says rather than simply raise social assistance payments, governments should consider a housing benefit to help with the other main cost for the poor: Rent. At the same time, the federal government should dismantle supply management of the dairy industry, the institute says. And governments at all levels should look at incentives that would bring fresh food and grocery chains into poor neighbourhoods. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Edmonton. Homicide

▶ A police officer and a medical examiner walk near the homicide scene where the bodies of two children were found in Edmonton yesterday.

JASON FRANSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Two young children found dead

Police said they had a man in custody yesterday after two young children were found dead in a townhouse. Investigators were releasing little information about what happened in the northeast Edmonton neighbourhood where officers discovered the youngsters.

Rights violated, cops sanctioned

Officers suspended for dumping drunken street people

Two Edmonton police officers who detained nine drunken homeless people in a sweltering paddy wagon before dumping them in a distant parking lot have both been suspended.

In delivering the sanctions yesterday, Insp. Paul Manuel said the message must go out that officers can't cavalierly violate people's rights.

"Abuse of these powers invites loss of public trust," Manuel told constables Patrick Hannas and Lael Sauter at a disciplinary hearing.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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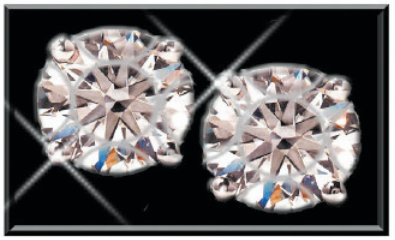

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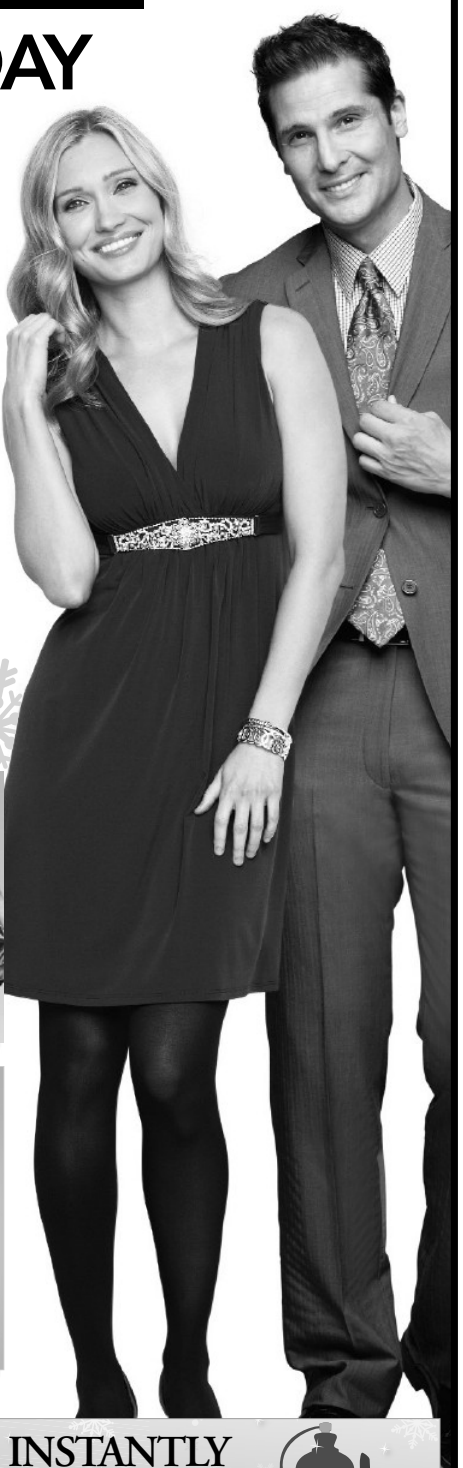

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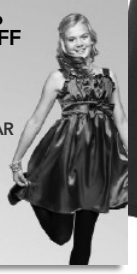

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ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SIGNATURE DRINKS

She says ...

JESSICA NAPIER

'Tis the season to get a bit festive, and if your family is anything like mine, "festive" means, well ... drunk.

What can I say; we all get a little too merry around the holidays. With so many libations to overindulge in, it's good to remind yourself what your cocktail of choice says about your personality. After all, you are what you drink.

Wine: You're mature and sophisticated, or at least you want people to think you are. You carry on pseudo-intellectual conversations and roll your eyes at people who mispronounce Gewürztraminer.

Domestic beer: You're a Canadian.

Imported beer: You're a Canadian who went to Europe for a couple of weeks.

Cosmopolitan: You think your drink is super cute and it totally matches your shoes and, oh my God, you're such a Carrie, no wait — you're totally a Samantha.

Red Bull and vodka: You are three months away from a full-blown cocaine addiction — or a heart attack.

Screwdriver: This is your first time at a bar and you saw someone on TV order this drink once.

Whisky: You're sporting a non-ironic moustache and own a diverse collection of sweater vests.

Shots: The drink of choice of the young, single and desperate to get laid.

Malt liquor: You drive a pick-up truck and have no taste buds.

Martini: You're a relatively experienced drinker that doesn't mind sitting alone at the bar because your Bluetooth headset makes you feel important. On the other hand, you might be James Bond.

Pimms: You enjoy polo shirts, tennis and speaking in a fake British accent.

Caesar: You haven't stopped drinking since the night before and are wondering why on Earth those lights are so f--ing bright.

Rum: Ahoy there!

Jägermeister: You are younger than 22 and intend on making some terrible life decisions before the end of the night.

Champagne: Two words, high maintenance.

Hard lemonade: Your older brother just bought you and your friends a four-pack of fluorescent-coloured alcho-pops that you think are just so badass. Don't worry; your high school party will have plenty of bushes for you to puke in.

Sherry: Ah, Frasier Crane — how nice of you to join us.

Piña colada: You'd rather be at the beach or gettin' caught in the rain.

A bottle of premium liquor: You routinely spend half of your paycheque on bottle service at pretentious nightclubs in the hopes of luring drunken party-goers into your booth.

Tequila: TEQUILA!

Read more of Jessica Napier's columns at metronews.ca/shesays

Cartoon

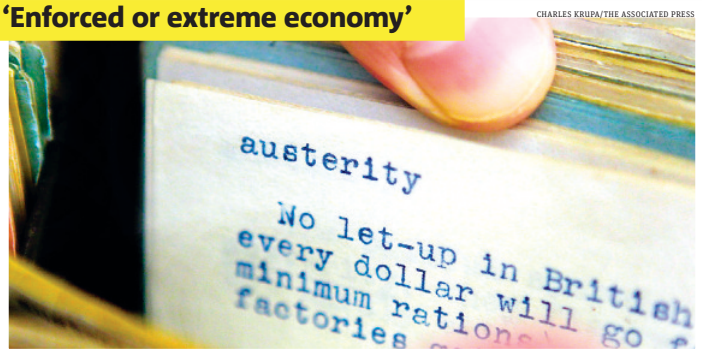
MICHAEL DE ADDER

Crisis spawns top word

Worth mentioning

'Enforced or extreme economy'

CHARLES KRUPA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



As Greece faced a debt crisis, the government passed a series of strict austerity measures, including tax hikes and public-sector pay cuts.

The move provoked a rush to online dictionaries from those searching for a definition.

Austerity, the 14th-century noun defined as "the quality or state of being austere" and "enforced or extreme economy," set off enough searches that Merriam-Webster named it as its Word Of The Year for 2010, the dictionary's editors announced yesterday.

John Morse, president and publisher of the Springfield, Mass.-based dictionary, said "austerity" saw more than 250,000 searches on the dictionary's free online tool and came with more coverage of the debt crisis.

Runners-up announced yesterday included "pragmatic," "moratorium," "socialism," and "bigot" — the last word resulted from public uses by former British prime minister Gordon Brown, former CNN host Rick Sanchez and former NPR senior analyst Juan Williams.

Also making the top-10 list was the word "doppelganger," while others on this year's list included "shellacking," "ebullient," "dissident," and "furtive."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Is it better to give or receive? Why?

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Metro Minute with winter solstice

Celebrate the winter solstice at the Canada Science and Technology Museum today. Marking the first day of winter, winter solstice — which occurs exactly when the Earth's axial tilt is farthest away from the sun — is really only a moment in time, but at the museum, it lasts all day. The whole family can enjoy indoor and outdoor activities from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At night, bundle up and join the Canada Science and Technology Museum for a free star party, where you can gaze at the night sky with telescopes and binoculars. The star party begins at 7 p.m. For more, visit Sciencetech.technomuses.ca or call 613-991-3053.

TRACEY TONG

CONTRIBUTED

▶ The Canada Science and Technology Museum is hosting numerous events to mark the winter solstice.

Facebook CEO networking on China trip?

China censors Internet content it deems politically sensitive and blocks many sites, including Facebook

JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

▶ Mark Zuckerberg

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg toured the offices of China's top search engine yesterday during a visit that has sparked speculation the social networking magnate is looking for business opportunities in the world's largest Internet market.

Facebook is blocked on the mainland, but Zuckerberg has expressed a business interest in China and has studied Mandarin.

Photos of Zuckerberg's visit to Baidu Inc. were quickly posted online.

Kaiser Kuo, Baidu's director of international communications, told The Associated Press that Zuckerberg had lunch with Baidu CEO Robin Li. He said he didn't know what they talked about but added that the two had met before.

Zuckerberg, who co-founded Facebook, is travelling with his girlfriend, Priscilla Chan, and no apparent entourage.

"Mark has had a long personal interest in China," Kuo said.

But Zuckerberg has also hinted that he's interested in more than that, saying during a speaking engagement in October, "How can you connect the whole world if you leave out 1.6 billion people?"

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Auto. Motives

▶ This image shows a scene from the Toyota 2011 Highlander "Kid Cave" commercial.

TOYOTA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Toyota uses kids to get to parents

Toyota is using the concept of kids' embarrassment over parental behaviour to sell Highlander SUVs. One ad shows a kid in a nondescript sedan mouthing "Help me!" as his parents croon, "Just call me angel of the morning!" to the radio. In an adjacent lane, a boy in a Highlander, watching a video on a backseat entertainment system, comments, "Just because you're a parent, doesn't mean you have to be lame."

Talisman to sell stake in shale gas

A deal by Talisman Energy Inc. to sell a 50 per cent stake in a shale gas project in northeastern B.C. to South African company Sasol for $1.05 billion helped boost its shares to their highest level in more than two years. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bell to pay $1.3M for Do Not Call violation

The CRTC has hit Bell Canada with a $1.3-million penalty for violating federal Do Not Call rules.

The telecommunications regulator found that independent telemarketers hired by Bell made unsolicited calls to sell services. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market moment

PRICES AS OF 5 P.M. YESTERDAY

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2 scene

Coens on True Grit: 'It's not a western'

Joel and Ethan Coen subvert expectations again with their latest But the directorial duo insist the western isn't like most westerns How could it be, coming from them?

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GETTY IMAGES

▶ Director Ethan Coen, actor Jeff Bridges and director Joel Coen attend the premiere of True Grit in New York City.

In discussing their new film, True Grit, Joel and Ethan Coen are clear about one thing: They have zero interest in talking about the 1969 John Wayne film that was also based on Charles Portis' novel, about a tough 14-year-old girl who enlists a grizzled U.S. marshal and a Texas ranger to track down her father's killer.

"I don't think any of us thought about much of anything in this with reference to the first movie," Ethan says. "We had seen the movie when it came out, but we were kids then."

Instead, the brothers looked to Portis' 1968 book, which focused more on young Mattie Ross (played by newcomer Hailee Steinfeld) than the first film adaptation.

And while the Coen brothers' eclectic career has covered a slew of genres, they've never done a traditional western before — and they'd argue that they still haven't.

"I don't think we thought about it as a genre movie so much," Ethan says. "It is a western inarguably — you know, there are guys with six-guns on horses. But it's not a western in that sense, and really we were thinking about the story, we were thinking about the novel more than doing a western, per se."

To find the right teenager to go toe-to-toe with Jeff Bridges' marshal and Matt Damon's ranger, they set out on a nationwide search — not that they really needed to.

"If we'd only known. Hailee's from Thousand Oaks," Ethan says with a laugh. "We looked all over the country. There were two casting people that spent basically 18 months going everywhere, just everywhere, seeing thousands of girls — and they could have stayed in L.A."

According to the Coens, what made Steinfeld stand out was her ability to wrap her mouth around the script's peculiar dialogue.

"Ninety-nine-point-nine percent of the hundreds or thousands of girls who read for this part washed out at the level of not being able to do the language, and that was something which was never an issue with Hailee," Joel says.

"Right from the beginning it was clear that she was completely comfortable with the language."

Though a distinct dialogue style might seem like a hallmark of the Coen brothers, much of the flowery lines of True Grit actually came from the source material.

"The kind of formality of it and the floweriness of it is just from the book," says Ethan. "That was the first thing Jeff mentioned, noticed and liked — the kind of foreign-sounding nature of the dialogue and the lack of contractions. We just lifted it from the book."

The Coen brothers, on location

There was one area where the Coen brothers didn't stay faithful to Charles Portis' novel. While the action in True Grit takes place in Arkansas and Oklahoma, the brothers filmed in New Mexico — partly for the weather and partly because of audience expectations, they admit.

"That's one thing that's not faithful to the novel," Ethan says. "I mean, the landscape is a total cheat. But you know, we kind of thought people will think it's a western, and some things you just can't mess with. People want that."

Joel agrees: "The whole pictorial idea of the movie would have been much different in a place like Arkansas," he says.

And there was the weather to consider. "We knew we wanted to have snow in the movie," Joel says.

"The trick was snow but not too much snow, and we weren't sure we were reliably going to get any snow at that time of year in Arkansas," Joel says.

Scene in brief

What Betty White did in 2010 doesn't usually happen. An 88-year-old actress with more than six decades in Hollywood suddenly became the object of adulation of the masses, which campaigned for her to host Saturday Night Live, boosting the show's ratings and helping her set ratings records for her own show.

After a year remarkable for a star of any age, White has been voted the Entertainer of the Year by members of The Associated Press. "It's ridiculous," White says of the honour, in an interview. "They haven't caught on to me, and I hope they never do."

There were 102 ballots submitted from U.S. news organizations that make up the AP's membership. Voters were asked to cast their ballots for who had the most influence on the entertainment world and culture in 2010. Previous winners include Taylor Swift, Tina Fey and Stephen Colbert.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ScanLife

Teen star Hailee Steinfeld shows new 'Grit' in debut role with Coens, Bridges, Damon. Learn how to scan on page 3.

▶ Shania Twain

Party for two: Twain engaged

Singer has new TV show, Why Not? With Shania Twain, in the works for Oprah Winfrey's OWN network Plans to release memoirs next year

Shania Twain has found love again. The Timmins, Ont., native is planning to marry Swiss businessman Frederic Thiebaud, according to US Weekly.

A Twain representative tells the magazine the 45-year-old country superstar became engaged about two months ago.

Thiebaud is the ex-husband of Twain's former friend Marie-Anne Thiebaud — the woman who allegedly came between Twain and her first husband, Robert (Mutt) Lange. Twain and Lange finalized their divorce earlier this year.

Twain wrote about Thiebaud on her website last August. "A dear friend and true gentleman by the name of Fred, has been the most constant companion of support for both Eja and me, and having gone through the suffering of his family splitting apart at the same time under the same extreme circumstances, he understood me better than anyone," she wrote. "We've become stronger and closer through it all, as have our children Eja and (Thiebaud's daughter) Johanna." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Town brings the heat

The Town
Genre: Thriller
Director: Ben Affleck
Stars: Ben Affleck, Rebecca Hall and Jon Hamm
●●●●○

No sophomore slump for Ben Affleck.

The actor turned director follows his acclaimed helming debut Gone Baby Gone with quality pulp about the Charlestown neighbourhood of his Boston hometown, where bank robbers thrive.

Affleck is Doug MacRay, leader of a brazen band of heisters who members include loose-cannon pal James (Jeremy Renner), a guy with both pluses and minuses.

They know how to knock off a bank, wearing Halloween masks for combo cover and shock value, but how do they storm the fortress of the heart? Doug gets distracted by the charms of Claire (Rebecca Hall), who begins as a hostage but becomes a very interested party.

Also hot in the hunt is FBI flatfoot Adam Frawley (Jon Hamm) who is tired of Charlestown's rep as America's favourite hold-up hood.

The Town is richly textured picture of strong characters and brisk action, the latter including what may be the year's best car chase.

Extras include director's commentary, extended cut, and a featurette called Ben's Boston, where Affleck reveals the reality behind his tale. PETER HOWELL

A blurry sequel

Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps
Genre: Drama
Director: Oliver Stone
Stars: Shia LaBeouf, Michael Douglas and Carey Mulligan
●●●○○

In this belated sequel to the epochal 1980s drama, greed is no longer good — and it's not much fun, either.

Oliver Stone's film is as firmly in tune with the headlines as his original Wall Street was 23 years ago. The first film examined the capitalistic excesses of the 1980s, where firms were smashed for sport as much as for profit. The sequel takes place during the global economic meltdown of the fall of 2008.

The difference between now and then is that Stone seems far less certain about what he wants to say, and he's a lot less amusing in how he says it. The clearly defined biblical contest of the first film has been replaced by a blurry battle of pygmies.

Michael Douglas' rapacious trader Gordon Gekko is back, emerging from eight years in prison for financial crimes committed in the first film. He's a lonely man, whose daughter Winnie (Carey Mulligan) refuses to see him, but he's not a broken one.

He's busily hustling his memoirs, and looking to score big dough again, thanks in part to the hustle of Shia LaBeouf's Jake Moore, a young corporate trader ripe for the taking. Problem: Jake is involved with Winnie.

LaBeouf is the movie's dramatic centre. At 24, he's one of America's best young actors, especially when he gets the right role, as he has here. The story often flags, but he never does.

Extras include a director's commentary, a conversation with Stone and his cast, plus featurettes about the real Wall Street.

PETER HOWELL

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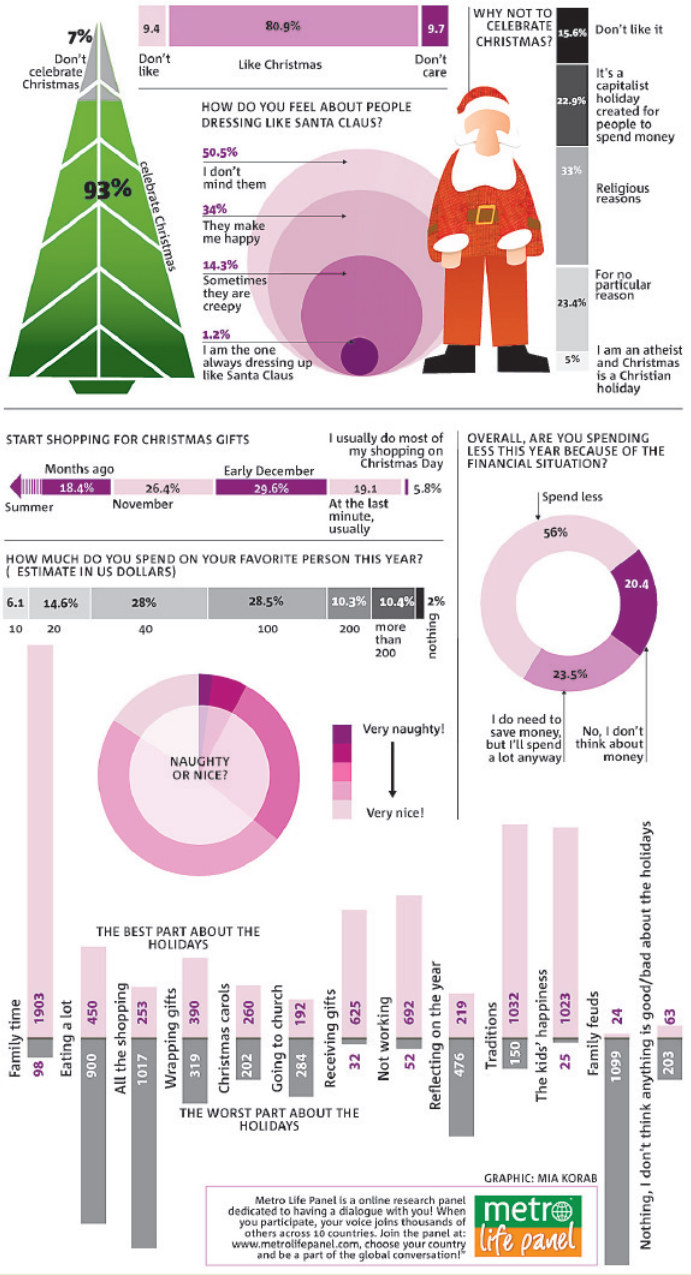
The 2010 Christmas reader poll results

We asked thousands of Metro readers how they felt about the holidays See who's been naughty or nice



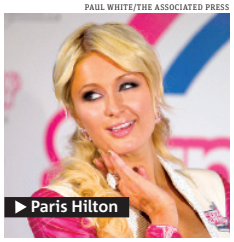
Paris revs up motorcycling team

Paris Hilton will now be hanging with bikers.

The hotel chain heiress who draws photographers wherever she goes will have her own team on the world motorcycling championship circuit.

The SupermartXe VIP by Paris Hilton team was unveiled by her in Madrid. It will compete in the 125cc category from 2011 to 2013. Hilton has agreed to attend at least five races next season.

PAUL WHITE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



"I can't believe I have my own racing team! So cool! :)" Hilton posted on Twitter while at the launch.

Hilton wore a low-cut, pink and white, rhinestone-studded racing suit. Team riders Sergio Gadea and Maverick Vinales are expected to wear more reserved outfits.

The team colours are pink, white and blue.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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TIP #12: START SAVING FOR NEXT YEAR

Based on how much you spent this year, plan ahead for next year. Open an eSavings account and set up small automatic transfers every time you get paid – next November you'll be ready to shop.

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HURRY UP TO REGISTER!!! School will be closed from December 20, 2009 to January 3, 2010

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$205.00 Out of province residents, visa holders

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▶ Katy Perry

The Top 10 tunes of 2010

▶ Looking for the perfect mix tape for 2010? ▶ These 10 songs are among the year's most entertaining

1. "When a Woman Loves," R. Kelly
An absolutely stunning love song with a pitch-perfect vocal performance that will send chills down your spine — for the right reasons.

2. "F--k You," Cee Lo
This phrase might not be so offensive if everyone delivered it as cheerily and soulfully as Cee Lo, in perhaps the year's wittiest track.

3. "Love the Way You Lie," Eminem feat. Rihanna
The song grabs you from the start of Rihanna's piercing vocal, and Eminem's tormented raps may be one of the more honest portrayals of love gone horribly wrong.

4. "Runaway," Kanye West
Let's toast indeed, to West's continued warped brilliance with a song that sarcastically pays tribute to his well-documented flaws.

5. "Tightrope," Janelle Monae feat. Big Boi
James Brown would be proud with this frenetic dance groove with killer horns and the coolest of raps from the ever-cool Big Boi.

6. "Soldier of Love" Sade
The opening drum salvo is captivating enough, but when Sade's alto croons, "I've lost the use of my heart, but I'm still alive," it's a haunting yet intoxicating delivery that seals the deal.

▶ Rihanna and Eminem in the Love The Way You Lie video.

7. "The Best in Me," Marvin Sapp
Sapp's gospel anthem celebrates God's ability to see past the imperfections mere mortals can't.

8. "Billionaire," Travie McCoy feat. Bruno Mars
This fantasy-filled song was the perfect anthem in a year where most of us were holding on to our wallets a little tighter. It was perhaps the best cameo from the smooth-voiced Bruno Mars.

9. "Teenage Dream," Katy Perry
It's frothy and poppy, but don't let that hide the fact that "Teenage Dream" is just a great song, period.

10. "Bed Intruder Song" Antoine Dodson & The Gregory Brothers
Don't play — you know "Hide Yo Kids, Hide Yo Wife" is ingrained in your brain, thanks to the Gregory Brothers ingenious mashup song that took Antoine Dodson from viral sensation to musical sensation. Run and tell that!

▶ Cee Lo

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Monae, West top list of 2010's best albums

1. Janelle Monae, ArchAndroid
Monae's ArchAndroid was a pure dreamland that wove in Walt Disney influences, Fela and James Brown-inspired beats, Outkast-style rhymes and Beatle-esque melodies for a heavenly, spectacular debut that envelops you completely in her fantasy world.

2. Kanye West, My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy
It's typical for artists who feel persecuted in the press to spill out their anger, frustration and pity in song. Thankfully, West's stunning fifth album doesn't go down that road. Instead, he brilliantly owns up to his dysfunction, acknowledging his flaws through (mostly) flawless tracks, gripping in their honesty and riveting in their musicality. Kanye can get away with being a jerk, as long as he makes music this amazing.

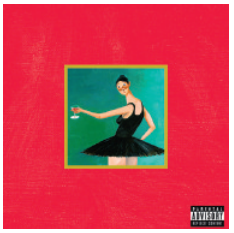
3. Eminem, Recovery
There are elements of Slim Shady, but what makes Recovery so commanding is hearing Marshall Mathers confront his demons with brutal honesty — and, of course, warped wit — on an album that restored his reputation as one of rap's all-time greats.

4. Sia, We Are Born
When word came that Sia was going to put out a dance album, there was every reason to fear that the serious songbird was taking an ill-advised jump on the Lady Gaga bandwagon. But Sia charts her own path with We Are Born, an album filled with infectious grooves, and it keeps you engaged even when the tempo slows.

5. R. Kelly, Love Letter
No midgets, no booty calls, no sex in the kitchen. R. Kelly trades perversion for perfection on the old-school throwback "Love Letter" — classy and classic.

6. Taylor Swift, Speak Now
Swift gets a lot of attention for her read-between-the-lines tomes, but after the guessing game stops (is this one about John Mayer? Is that one about Taylor Lautner?), what remains are terrific, compelling songs with rich plot lines that will stay with you long after the gossip fades.

7. Sade, Soldier of Love
Sade's music is so reliable in its greatness that sometimes people — say, Grammy voters — forget how much work it takes to be so good. Always alluring, always enchanting, always sensuous, Sade — with her first album in 10 years — returns with an exquisite collection of entrancing songs.



8. Corinne Bailey Rae, The Sea
Rae channeled her grief over the untimely death of her husband into The Sea, but what developed is an album that's wistful and peppered with optimism in the face of despair.

GETTY IMAGES

▶ Above: Taylor Swift. At left: Kanye West's My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy.

9. Ray LaMontagne and the Pariah Dogs, God Willin' & The Creek Don't Rise
Ray LaMontagne has been known for his masterful songwriting for some time, but on "God Willin' & The Creek Don't Rise" — a sometimes morose, heartbreaking collection of despairing tracks — his lyrical gifts are perhaps at its best.

10. Gorillaz, Plastic Beach
The cartoon gimmick may have lost its edge, but the Gorillaz haven't: Plastic Beach blends hip-hop, funk, rock and electronica for spacey party grooves.

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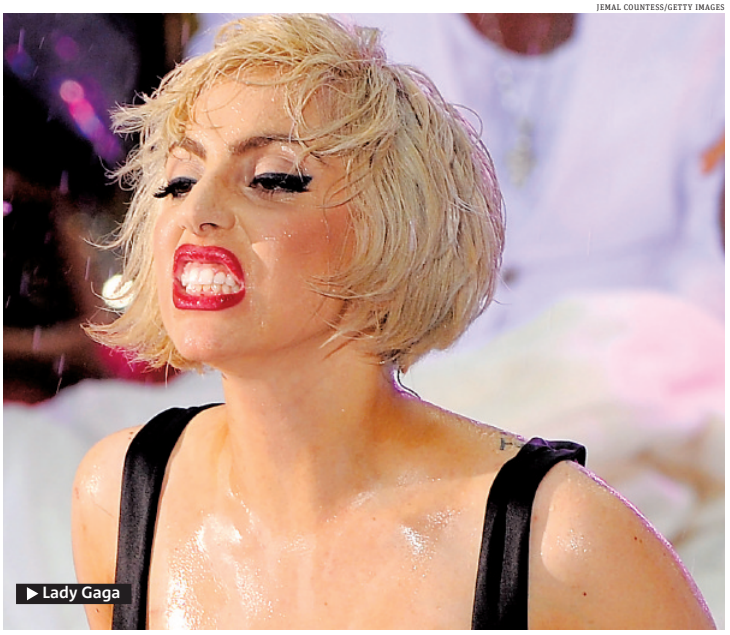
Gaga is 'furious and devastated'

JEMAL COUNTESS/GETTY IMAGES


▶ Lady Gaga

Singer stopped by the snow in France

Lady Gaga isn't having the best time in France. The singer returned to Paris to perform make-up dates for October shows that had been cancelled, only to get stopped by the weather, according to Popeater. Because of snow, authorities wouldn't let her trucks into the city. Sunday night's show was rescheduled for tonight.

"All 28 of my trucks for the Monsterball were detained by the French government going on over 26 [hours]," Gaga posted to Twitter. "[Two] of my employees were arrested trying to get into Paris so we could perform. I am furious and devastated. It's unfair to my fans and to me." METRO

Deschanel suing Madden

Zooey Deschanel isn't too happy with Steve Madden, as the actress is suing the shoe company for $2 million over a failed endorsement deal, according to TMZ. According to the suit, which was filed in L.A. late last week, Deschanel claims she held up her end of the deal — and even turned down other endorsement deals — while Steve Madden never held up its end of the bargain. METRO

Celebrity tweets

Neil Patrick Harris [@ActuallyNPH] My favorite holiday song: 12 Days of Christmas, by the Muppets. Why: Beaker singing 'Mee Mee Mee Mee Mee Mee!' slays me

Stephen Colbert [@StephenAtHome] I'm on break! And the fact that I'm tweeting about it may be the first sign of my Twitter addiction

Amy Winehouse [@amyjademermaid] can't find me bleedin notebooks — theyve done a runsies

Kelly Osbourne [@MissKellyO] Just got back from seeing Narnia why did prince Caspian go from being Spanish to English? METRO

Talking points

Neverland Ranch to become a school?

PERFORMING ARTS. The future of Michael Jackson's famed Neverland Ranch is still in question, but the company that owns it, Colony Capital, is reportedly turning it into a performing arts school named after the late singer, according to TMZ.

The company reportedly wants to model the school after New York's Juilliard.

"It's an interesting idea," a rep for Jackson's estate says. "And we'd be open to it." METRO

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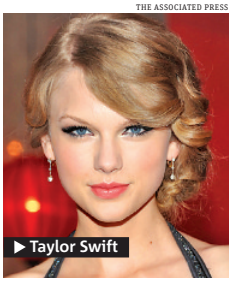
▶ Taylor Swift

Did Gwyneth Paltrow introduce Jake and Taylor?

Reports came out recently that Jake Gyllenhaal and new girlfriend Taylor Swift had been introduced during a dinner at Gwyneth Paltrow and Chris Martin's London home, but Paltrow is completely caught off-guard by the story.

"Where is this coming from?" she asks USA Today when asked if the stories are true.

"Well, I'm scared to say. It's so weird, I wonder how people find out these things. It was a while ago, so I don't know why it would come out today." METRO

Lutfi allegedly stalking Lindsay

Sam Lutfi has allegedly been stalking Lindsay Lohan, sending her menacing text messages as well as threatening her mom, Dina Lohan, through texts, according to TMZ. The situation has gotten so bad that Lohan's camp has even contacted the FBI to investigate.

Lutfi made the news for being involved with Britney Spears during her 2008 breakdown. METRO

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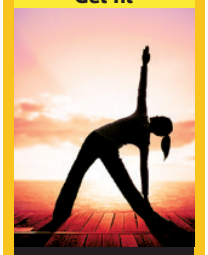
3 life

Get fit



There are some things you can do to minimize your risk of developing breast cancer. Here are factors you can do something about:
- Lost excess weight
- Quit smoking
- Exercise regularly
- Limit your alcohol intake
- Breastfeed your baby
- Avoid unnecessary exposure to chemicals.

CELIA MILNE

ScanLife

Hospital report: progress in reducing death rates, some surgeries unneeded

ISTOCK PHOTO

▶ Experts suggest that one reason why women don't get mammograms more often is that they are confused about the procedure.

What's the harm?

Statistics in Canada and the U.S. suggest women should be going in for free mammograms more often ◐ Experts looking at why they choose not to ◐ Read on for why you should get one

CELIA MILNE
LIFE@METRONEWS.CA

Women are not going for "free" mammograms as often as they should – and could – be.

A new study in the U.S. has found only 50 to 60 per cent of women who should be going for regular mammography tests actually do.

And cost certainly is not the issue: All of the 1.5 million women in the study had health insurance, and here in Canada, it's covered.

Mammography as recommended "can reduce your risk of dying from breast cancer," says Dr. Gillian Bromfield, senior manager of cancer control policy at the Canadian Cancer Society.

The Society recommends all women between the ages of 50 and 69 get regular mammograms once every two years.

So how does Canada compare with the U.S?

When surveyed, 72 per cent of Canadian women in this age group say they are getting them done.

"That is pretty good," says Bromfield, though she added, "It might not be quite that high. Women are more likely to give the expected answer, or they don't realize it's been more than a couple of years since their last mammogram."

"It is proven to save lives. That's an important message. There's a lot of misunderstanding about that."
DR. GILLIAN BROMFIELD, CANADIAN CANCER SOCIETY

Ideally, she says, all women should follow the recommendations.

If you are in your 40s, it is recommended that you talk to your doctor about your benefits and risks of mammography.

If you decide to get mammography, there is some evidence you should get it done annually, says Bromfield.

In any age group, if a doctor refers you for a mammogram because of symptoms or a family history, the public health system covers the cost.

"It is proven to save lives. That's an important message. There's a lot of misunderstanding about that," says Bromfield.

In the U.S. study, authors said that reasons for the lower than expected rates might be fear of the procedure and confusion about guidelines.

Statistics

Breast cancer by numbers

- Number of women in Canada expected to develop breast cancer this year: 23,200
- Number of men in Canada expected to develop breast cancer this year: 180
- Percentage of women with breast cancer who survive more than five years: 87
- Number of deaths expected this year: 5,300

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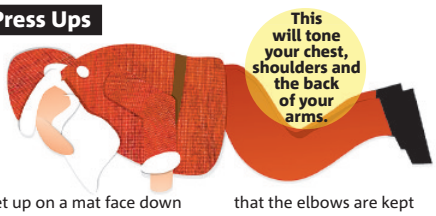
Ultimate Christmas workout

Hey fatty. Yeah you, Mr. Claus. If you are visiting family and unable to get to the gym over the festive period, make sure you still get out of the house for regular walk or runs and try including the following full-body workout.

Warm up by walking or jogging on the spot and then perform each exercise for 30 seconds in a circuit style format for three to five times depending upon your fitness levels with a two minute rest between each circuit. Make sure you stretch afterward to help your recovery.

TEXT: MATT ROBERTS
PERSONAL TRAINER TO THE STARS

Press Ups

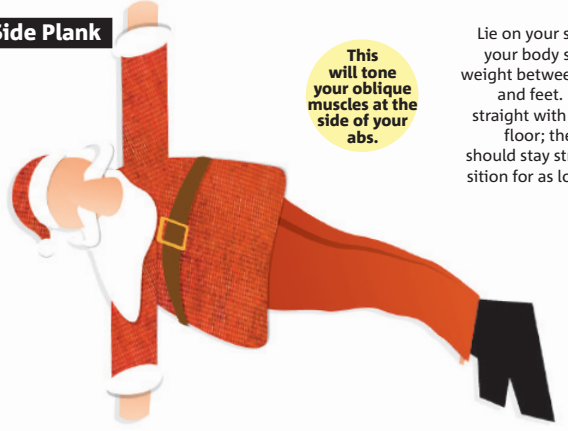


Set up on a mat face down with your hands in line with your shoulders and your feet hip-width apart on your toes. Keeping the hips elevated and bracing the abdomen, slowly lower your body ensuring that the elbows are kept tucked in. Once you have reached your maximum range of motion drive back up to starting position with a faster tempo.

Sumo Squat

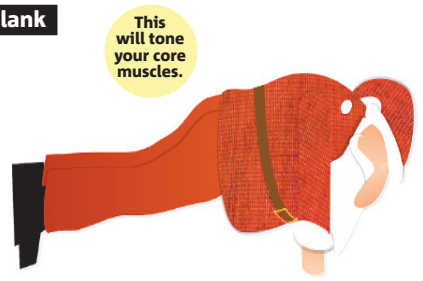
Keep your head up and your back straight with your feet about 30 inches apart. Point your toes and knees a little outwards. Squat until your upper thighs are parallel to the floor. Slowly return to the starting position

Side Plank



Lie on your side and elevate your body supporting your weight between your forearm and feet. Keep your body straight with the hips off the floor; the neck and back should stay straight. Hold position for as long as required. Repeat on the other side.

Plank



Lie face down with your elbows on the ground; elevate your body up, keeping your weight distributed between your forearms and feet. Your elbows should be bent at a 90-degree angle.

Keep your back straight with the hips raised off the floor. Squeeze the torso tight ensuring the body is parallel to the floor. Hold this position for as long as required.

Walking Lunge

Step forward and bend the front and back legs to ninety degrees, shift your weight forward maintaining a straight back and step through with the other leg again bending the front and back knees to ninety degrees. Continue this moving walking motion moving the lunge forward for the set number of repetitions.

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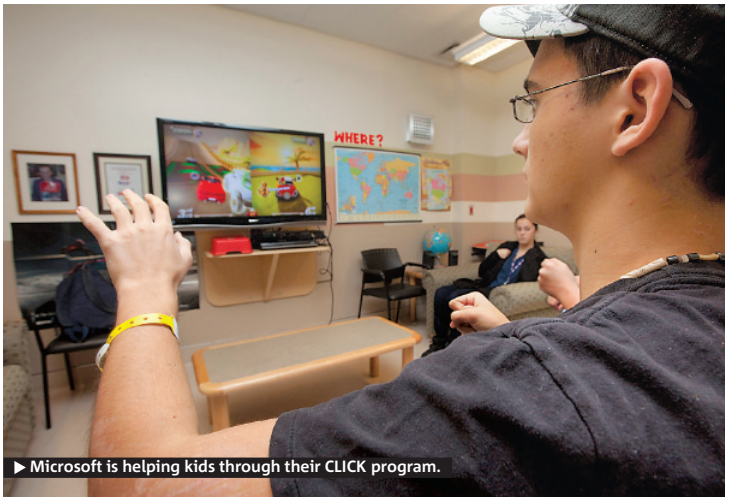
▶ Tyrone Henry, 17, right to left, and Jude Krause, 12, who are patients at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario play with a motion-tracking video game as part of the CLICK program in Ottawa.



▶ Microsoft is helping kids through their CLICK program.

Plugging patients into rehab options

New technologies help hospitals rethink power of play in a wired world ◐ Assisting with quicker recovery

Tyrone Henry doesn't consider himself much of a video game aficionado.

But the 17-year-old's quiet demeanour vanishes when he talks about how good he is at playing racing games on the new Microsoft Kinect.

Henry has lived at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario since September, recuperating from a car accident that left him paralyzed from the waist down.

The lure of the latest gaming system in the playrooms at CHEO helps get him out of his room, says the self-professed introvert.

But it's not just about having the opportunity to socialize.

"When playing games and stuff, I forget I'm stuck in a chair," he says.

"I don't even realize that I can't feel my legs. I feel like I am just sitting down playing a game."

"Even with rudimentary finger movement, they can start typing again, whereas if we only had a pen and paper ability to do writing, they wouldn't have been able to participate."
MAUREEN JONES, CHILD LIFE SPECIALIST

Children's hospitals have always focused on making life feel normal for children in their care, but new technologies are helping them rethink what the power of play in a wired world actually means.

Five years ago, CHEO joined with Microsoft to develop the Child Life Interactive Computers for Kids program, known as CLICK.

Microsoft donated tablet PCs, gaming equipment, webcams and the like to the hospital and also paid for child life specialist Maureen Jones' salary, allowing her to focus 100 per cent of her time on how technology can help the kids play and heal.

"I can see them being able to start school, start communicating a lot faster," she says.

"Even with rudimentary finger movement, they can start typing again, whereas if we only had a pen and paper ability to do writing, they wouldn't have been able to participate."

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TA: Tracy Anderson, celebrity fitness trainer

CA: Christina Agnew, nutritionist and founder of rawfairies.com
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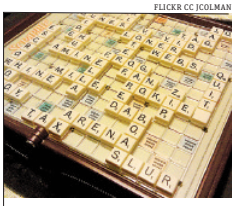
PARTY TIME

- Having a nap before going out is a good slimming tip — we tend to eat more when we're tired. **CA**
- Alternate each alcoholic drink with a glass of mineral water topped with fresh lime to limit your alcoholic intake and stay hydrated. **CA**
- Munch on raw vegetable crudités but go easy on the dips, where the calories hide. Chew your food thoroughly and slowly to avoid overeating. **CA**
- To drop a size in record time, can be done simply by eating clean foods, whole foods, raw and organic foods, and by creating a work-out that gives you maximum results in the shortest amount of time. Be sure to find out what whole body exercises will move you toward your goal. The other thing is to just get up and do it! **CL & JB**

FIGHT THE FLU

- Boost your immune system by eating fruit and vegetables rich in vitamin C and bioflavonoids such as berries, peppers and guava. **MK**
- Eat garlic and onions for their antibacterial and antiseptic properties. **MK**

- Exercise works your cardiovascular and builds your immune system. It strengthens and helps to fight off bacteria and infection easier. **CL & JB**
- Avoid foods containing sugar and refined carbohydrates as they weaken the immune system. **MK**


FLICKR CC JCOLMAN

KEEP FIT

- A slow walk will aid digestion, so get up and go for a stroll after lunch. **RB**
- Stretch your brain in a game of Scrabble or watch a fun Christmas film. If you want a nap after dinner sleep in an upright chair rather than lying flat as this could cause indigestion. **MK**
- To keep your energy up, avoid starchy, sugary foods or keep them to a minimum. **CL & JB**

DETOXING

- Sip dandelion root tea throughout the day and stay away from coffee and black tea, as these cause dehydration. **MK**
- Drink a mug of fennel tea before going out. It's an appetite suppressant. **RB**
- If you grab a square of chocolate (sugar), grab a handful of nuts (protein) to fill you up and balance blood sugar. **MK**

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Holiday alternatives

PETER ROCKWELL
LIQUIDASSETS@EASTLINK.CA

After taking a straw poll of friends, family and strangers on the Internet, it looks like many of you may not be having turkey or ham for dinner on Christmas day.

This rebellion against tradition is cool because it means that there will be lots of different bottles on holiday tables this season.

Boiled lobster is high on the list of alternative mains (especially in Atlantic Canada).

A crisp sauvignon blanc from New Zealand or bright, fruit-forward chardonnay from the New World would be an ideal match.

If you're going for a Charles Dickens vibe, goose could be on the menu.

Surprisingly adaptable, it's a great partner for a red French Bordeaux, a Spanish Tempranillo or a chewy Aussie shiraz.

Since I love roast beef, it's a guarantee the Rockwells will serve it at least once before the year ends.

Though also quite open to liquid partners, a spicy malbec from Argentina or a California zinfandel would make a perfect union.

Another choice is a New World cabernet with Errazuriz's 2008 Max Reserva Cabernet Sauvignon ($17.95 - $18.99) from Chile, which offers plenty of dense black currant fruit, rich tannins and a lingering dark chocolate finish.

Prices reflect the range across the country. Some products may not be available in all provinces.

Satay the calories out of hors d'oeuvres

This holiday season, skip the fat & sodium of fried treats in favour of these healthy meat choices

ROSE REISMAN
LIFE@METRONEWS.CA

Beef Hoisin Meatballs

These are perfect hors d'oeuvre for a dinner party. Meatballs are usually made from regular ground meat, which has three times the fat and calories of extra-lean.

My version compensates for the fat with a hoisin sauce. The red currant jelly adds a tart-sweet flavour and gives the sauce the thickness it requires.

Ingredients:

- 8 oz extra-lean ground beef
- 3 tbsp dry breadcrumbs
- 2 tbsp hoisin sauce
- 1 tsp crushed garlic
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsp minced green onion
- 1/3 cup hoisin sauce
- 1/3 cup red currant jelly
- 1 tsp crushed garlic
- ½ tsp minced fresh ginger
- 2 tbsp water
- tbsp chopped green onion
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh cilantro or parsley

Preparation:

1. For the meatballs, combine the beef, breadcrumbs, hoisin sauce, garlic, egg and onion. Form into 20 to 24 small meatballs about 1 inch in diameter.
2. Spray a non-stick skillet with cooking oil and add the meatballs. Cook over medium-high heat for 3 minutes, turning until browned on all sides.
3. For the sauce, combine the hoisin sauce, jelly, garlic, ginger and water in a small bowl.
4. Add to the meatballs and stir well. Cover and simmer on low heat for 10 minutes. Serve garnished with the green onions and cilantro.

Per serving: Calories 150 • Protein 8.1 g • Carbohydrates 19.2 g • fibre 0.6 g • Total fat 4.2 g • Saturated fat 1.5 g • Cholesterol 52 mg • Sodium 321 mg • prep time 15 minutes • cook time 13 minutes

Shrimp Skewers with Hoisin-Apricot Sauce

The combination of shrimp, hoisin and apricot flavours is wonderful. This would also be delicious with scallops or thin strips of boneless chicken breast.

Ingredients:

- 16 medium shrimp (about 12 oz), peeled and deveined
- 16 wooden skewers (about 6 inches long)
- 1/4 cup apricot jam
- 1 tbsp oyster sauce
- 3 tbsp hoisin sauce
- 3 tbsp chopped fresh basil

Preparation:

1. Threat shrimp on skewers.
2. Combine the apricot jam, oyster and hoisin sauce in a small bowl. Set aside half of the sauce. Brush the other half over the shrimp.
3. In a grill pan or a skillet lightly coated with cooking spray, sauté the shrimp, just until they are no longer pink, about 5 minutes. Serve with the remaining sauce and garnish with basil.

Per serving (1 skewer): Calories 35 • Protein 4 g • Carbohydrates 5 g • fibre 0.1 g • Total fat 0.3 g • Saturated fat 0.1 g • Cholesterol 32 mg • Sodium 94 mg • prep time 15 minutes • cook time 5 minutes

Chicken satays with peanut coconut sauce

These satays can be served as an appetizer or a main course with a side dish. Use a natural peanut butter to avoid trans fats and added sugar. Light coconut milk is available and much healthier than regular. It only has 3 grams of fat per 1/4 cup, compared to 10 grams for the regular.

Ingredients:

- 12 oz skinless boneless chicken breasts (about 3 breasts)
- 18 wooden skewers (about 6 inches long)

Sauce

- 1/4 cup light coconut milk
- 2 tbsp natural peanut butter
- 2 tsp low-sodium soy sauce
- 2 tsp sesame oil
- 2 tsp rice vinegar
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 tsp finely chopped garlic
- 1/2 tsp finely chopped ginger
- 1/2 tsp hot chili sauce

Garnish

- 3 tsbp chopped cilantro; 1 tsp sesame seeds

Preparation:

1. Cut the chicken into strips about 4 inches long and 2 inches wide. Thread the strips of chicken onto the skewers.
2. In a bowl whisk coconut milk, peanut butter, soy sauce, sesame oil, rice vinegar, honey, garlic, ginger and chili sauce. Reserve half of the sauce; brush the other half over the chicken.
3. In a nonstick skillet cook the chicken for 5 minutes or just until no longer pink. Serve with the remaining sauce and garnish with cilantro and sesame seeds.

Per serving (1 skewer): Calories 42 • Protein 4 g • Carbohydrates 1 g • fibre 0.1 g • Total fat 2.2 g • Saturated fat 0.3 g • Cholesterol 10 mg • Sodium 34 mg • prep time 15 minutes • cook time 5 minutes

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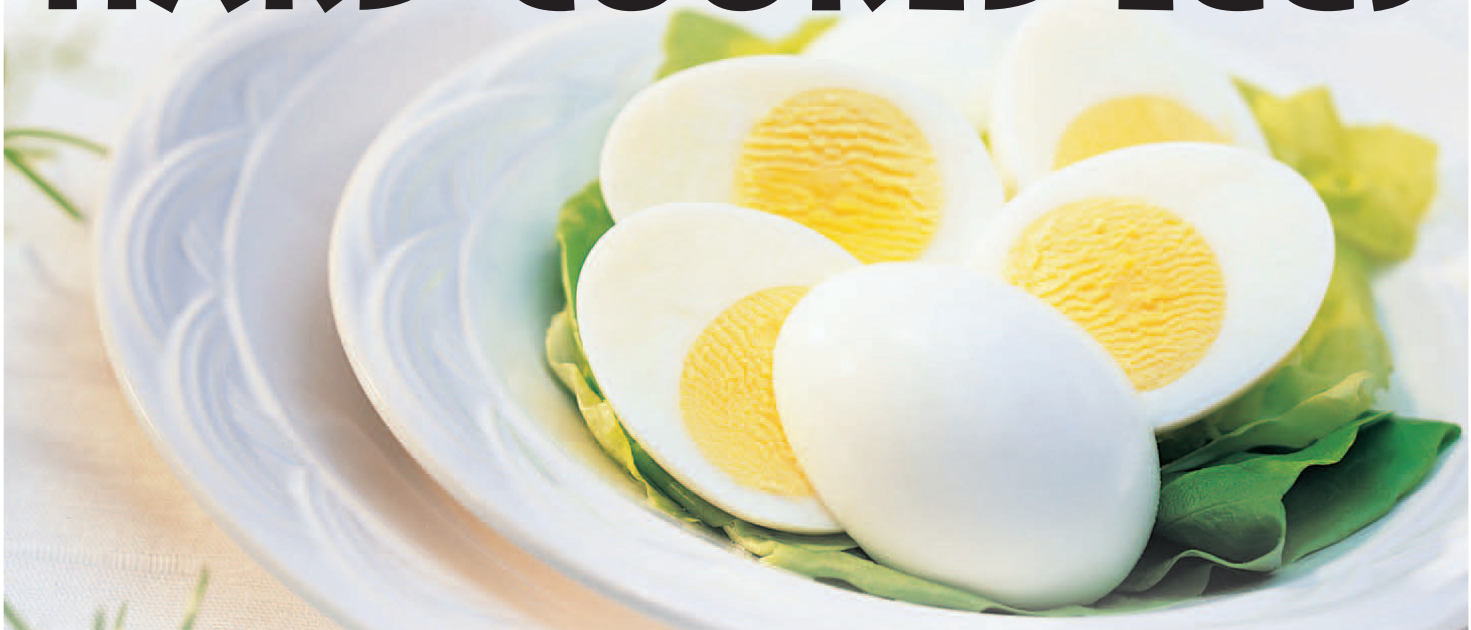

EASY

1. Place eggs in a single layer in saucepan
2. Cover eggs with water
3. Cover saucepan and bring to a boil
4. Remove from heat, let stand for 18-23 minutes
5. Run cold water over eggs until cooled

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